



Children enrolled in the Sitka Native Education Program march down Lincoln Street this afternoon as part of the Elizabeth Peratrovich Day Parade. Sitka schools were let out early today in

order to allow students to watch and participate in the parade. Several other Elizabeth Peratrovich Day events are scheduled for the weekend. (Sentinel Photo by James Poulson)

Sitka Celebrates Heritage of Elizabeth Peratrovich

By SHANNON HAUGLAND
Sentinel Staff Writer

Sitka celebrated Elizabeth Peratrovich Day today, honoring the Native civil rights leader with a parade from Crescent Harbor to the ANB Founders Hall for a luncheon and reflections on her contributions toward ending discrimination in Alaska.

Sitka District schools and Mt. Edgumbe High School were let out early for the parade, which started at 2 p.m.

Other Elizabeth Peratrovich Day

events will include a public reading by Native historian Bob Sam, 6:30 p.m. tonight at Sitka Public Library; and a screening of a documentary film about Elizabeth Peratrovich, “Rights for All: Ending Jim Crow in Alaska,” at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Sheldon Jackson Museum. Light refreshments will be served in the lobby before and after the film, sponsored by the Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum.

Gov. Steve Cowper declared the first Elizabeth Peratrovich Day in 1988 to recognize the contributions

Peratrovich made toward winning civil rights for Alaska Natives.

The Alaska Legislature established the annual holiday as Feb. 16, the day in 1945 on which the Anti-Discrimination Act was signed. The declaration noted “her courageous, unceasing efforts to eliminate discrimination and bring about equal rights in Alaska.” (Alaska Statutes 44.12.065.)

After the act was passed, both Elizabeth and her husband Roy were recognized throughout the state for their contributions in the fight for civil rights for Alaska Native people:

The Elizabeth Peratrovich Award was established in her honor by the Alaska Native Sisterhood.

In 1992, Gallery B of the Alaska House of Representatives chamber in the Alaska State Capitol was renamed in her honor, the only gallery named for someone other than a former legislator.

In 2003, a park around the former Anchorage city hall in downtown Anchorage was named for Elizabeth and Roy Peratrovich, and in 2017, the theater in Ketchikan’s Southeast Alaska Discovery Center was named in her honor.

The 1988 proclamation by the governor states that “Elizabeth Peratrovich worked tirelessly to overcome the prejudice and discrimination toward Alaska Natives. Her work and testimony were instrumental in the passage of the anti-discrimination law.”

The law gave all citizens full and equal enjoyment of all public places including hotels, restaurants, shops, services, movie theaters and transportation services. Those found guilty of posting signs to restrict people on racial grounds were to be punished by “imprisonment in jail for not more than

30 days or fined no more than \$250, or both.”

“A Recollection of Civil Rights Leader Elizabeth Peratrovich, 1911-1958,” published by the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska and the state Employment and Training Division in 1991, provides details about her life, and the struggle for the passage of the civil rights law.

Elizabeth Jean Wanamaker was born on July 4, 1911, in Petersburg, and was adopted by Presbyterian Church missionaries Andrew and Mary Wanamaker. She lived in several Southeast communities, before graduating from Ketchikan High School and attending Sheldon Jackson Junior College in Sitka. She earned her teaching credentials at Western College of Education in Bellingham, now called Western Washington University.

On Dec. 15, 1931, she married Roy Peratrovich of Klawock. After college, the two returned to Roy’s hometown before moving to Juneau with their three children to take advantage of the opportunities provided by a larger town. But the publication noted that they experienced racism in the capital city.

“The Peratroviches found a home in a nice neighborhood where they could envision their children playing and establishing lasting childhood friendships,” according to “A Recollection.” “But when the owners realized they were Indian the lease agreement was not let. As for school, that was another disappointment. To say they were hardly encouraged to feel comfortable was putting it nicely, according to Roy Jr.”

Elizabeth Peratrovich became famous for a persuasive speech she de-

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Russians Charged In Meddling in Election

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thirteen Russians, including a businessman close to Vladimir Putin, were charged today in an elaborate plot to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election through social media propaganda, aimed in part at helping Republican Donald Trump and harming the prospects of his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton.

The federal indictment, brought by the office of special counsel Robert Mueller, represents the most direct allegation to date of illegal Russian meddling during the campaign that sent Trump to the White House. It also marks the first criminal charges against Russians believed to have secretly worked to influence the outcome.

Trump claimed vindication, noting in a tweet that Russian interference efforts alleged in the indictment began in 2014 — “long before I announced that I would run for President.”

“The results of the election were not impacted. The Trump campaign did nothing wrong — no collusion!” he tweeted. However, the Mueller investigation continues.

The collusion question, still unresolved, has been at the heart of the probe, which before Friday had produced charges against four Trump associates. The U.S. intelligence community has said the Russian government

interfered to benefit Trump, including by orchestrating the hack of Democratic emails, and Mueller and his prosecutors have been assessing whether the campaign coordinated with Russia in any meddling.

The latest indictment does not focus on the hacking but instead centers on a social media effort that began in 2014 and continued past the election, with the goal of producing confusion and discontent in the American political process. Trump himself has been reluctant to acknowledge the interference.

Though the indictment lays out a vast and wide-ranging effort to sway political opinion during the presidential primaries and the bitterly contested general election, it does not allege that any American or Trump campaign associate knowingly participated. Trump campaign associates had only “unwitting” contact with Russians who posed as Americans during election season, it says.

It alleges that Russians working in concert with the Internet Research Agency, a St. Petersburg-based troll farm, purchased internet advertisements in the names of Americans whose identities they had stolen, staged political rallies while posing as American political activists and paid people

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Gov’s 2nd Nominee For Senate Seat Drops Out

JUNEAU (AP) — Alaska Senate President Pete Kelly says he holds no hard feelings over the drama that’s played out over two failed attempts to fill an open Senate seat.

He says Gov. Bill Walker and his team were “firing shots in a battle that didn’t exist.”

Senate Republicans rejected Walker’s first pick because he wasn’t on a list of finalists sent to Walker by Republicans in that district.

Senate Republicans urged Walker

to ask the district for more names if he didn’t like the finalists.

Walker’s next pick, Thomas Braund, was on the list but sparked outrage over social media posts. Walker’s chief of staff, Scott Kendall, said Republicans “have the nominee they demanded.”

After Braund withdrew, Kendall told Alaska’s GOP chairman Walker rejected the other two finalists and requested more names.

FBI: Failed to Check Tip on School Shooter

PARKLAND, Fla. (AP) — The FBI received a tip last month that the suspect in the Florida school shooting had a “desire to kill” and access to guns and could be plotting an attack, but agents failed to investigate, the agency said today, Florida Gov. Rick Scott called for the FBI director to resign because of the agency’s failure.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions said the shooting that killed 17 people Wednesday was a “tragic consequence” of the FBI’s missteps and ordered a review of the Justice Department’s processes. He said it’s now clear that the nation’s premier law enforcement agency missed warning signs.

In more evidence that there had been signs of trouble with suspect Nikolas Cruz, Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said at a Friday news conference that his office had received more than 20 calls about him in the

past few years.

A person who was close to Cruz called the FBI’s tip line on Jan. 5 and provided information about Cruz’s weapons and his erratic behavior, including his disturbing social media posts. The caller was concerned that Cruz could attack a school.

In a statement, the agency acknowledged that the tip should have been shared with the FBI’s Miami office and investigated, but it was not. The startling admission came as the agency was already facing criticism for its treatment of a tip about a YouTube comment posted last year. The comment posted by a “Nikolas Cruz” said, “Im going to be a professional school shooter.”

The FBI investigated the remark but did not determine who made it.

The 19-year-old Cruz has been charged with killing 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, north of Miami.

FBI Director Christopher Wray said the agency was still reviewing its missteps on the January tip. He said he was “committed to getting to the bottom of what happened,” as well as assessing the way the FBI responds to information from the public.

“We have spoken with victims and families and deeply regret the additional pain this causes all those affected by this horrific tragedy,” Wray said in the statement.

Scott on Friday sharply criticized the federal law enforcement agency, calling the FBI’s failure to take action “unacceptable.”

“Seventeen innocent people are dead and acknowledging a mistake isn’t going to cut it,” the governor said. “... The families will spend a lifetime wondering how this could happen, and an apology will never give them the answers they desperately need.”

The FBI is already under intense

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Fishermen Offer Berths to Wannabe Deckhands

By ABIGAIL BLISS
Sentinel Staff Writer

Cathryn Klusmeier comes from a long line of Arkansans. Hers is not a family of fishermen, and her childhood in the landlocked state afforded little time on the ocean.

After moving to Sitka, however, she snagged a job on Eric Jordan’s F/V I Gotta in 2014, and quickly learned the ins and outs of Jordan’s family trolling operation, becoming one of an increasingly rare breed of young people able

to break into commercial fishing in Alaska.

Four years later, Klusmeier still works with Jordan, who, inspired by her success, wants to introduce other young people to the industry. Over the past three years, Klusmeier has teamed with Jordan to take over 40 trainees out fishing for a few days or a week at a time with Klusmeier teaching them the ropes, just as Jordan taught her when she first set foot on the F/V I Gotta.

It doesn’t matter if you have next to

no experience fishing, Klusmeier said, if you have an open mind and a desire to learn, there’s a spot for you in the industry.

She points to her own story as proof.

“Four years ago, I just got a job with Eric on a boat,” she said. “I came, I had no experience in fishing, and then learned how to fish ... I was a person who had no background in any of this, but had a willingness to learn.”

In 2017, Jordan partnered with the Alaska Longline Fishermen’s Association to formalize his efforts encouraging other young folk to carve a path like Klusmeier’s.

The result is the Crewmember Apprenticeship Program, which will take on its first formal crop of apprentices this summer. The program aims to provide young adults, particularly those from Sitka, with an understanding of the commercial fishing lifestyle, as well as the hard skills necessary to succeed in the field.

“The future of our fisheries is dependent on young fishermen learning to love and care for the fish we harvest and the habitat essential to their well being,” Jordan said in a statement last week. “Our generation’s legacy will be defined how we, as Alaskan fishermen, rebuilt and enhanced our fisheries, and how we mentored the next generation.”

Through the new program, ALFA will provide training for both the apprentices and the skippers committed

to mentoring them prior to sending the teams out to sea, explained Alyssa Russell, the organization’s outreach and communications manager. The program will offer short-term apprenticeships lasting from one day to one week, and long-term apprenticeships lasting from one week to several months.

The apprenticeship program is supported, in part, by a \$70,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to build up the program in Sitka and, down the line, support similar apprenticeships in other Alaskan communities.

Russell expects five to ten skippers, including Jordan, and some ten apprentice deckhands to participate in the program this year, and expressed hope that a significant portion of the trainees will come from the community of Sitka itself.

Terry Perenovich, a skiff fisherman, will be one of the local mentors in the 2018 season. He said he has informally introduced four young people to his style of fishing over the past two years, and has been pleased at the interest they have shown.

In Alaska, where the average age of fishermen is over 50, Perenovich believes it is crucial to pass on his knowledge to the next generation. He said he was motivated to take younger deckhands on board by the “issue of the graying of the fleet,” explaining that the industry had been good to him and

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Deckhand Cathryn Klusmeier stands on the deck of the F/V I Gotta Thursday at ANB Harbor. (Sentinel Photo by James Poulson)

The Daily Sentinel
will not publish
Mon., Feb. 19,
in observance of
Presidents Day.